



Asia Creative Writing C O N F E R E N C E

PROCEEDING

The Role of Local Wisdom in Shaping Identity

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A Brief Introduction

In response to the threatened existence of local cultures in a global consumerist model, there is a big challenge not only for writers but also for language teachers to explore local wisdom and incorporate it in creative writing and (English) language teaching. Particularly, (English) language teachers are suggested to incorporate local cultural features in their teaching. This statement may serve as a general summary of the papers presented during the ACWC conference.

Creative writing itself has developed in practice. It has conventionally been referred to literary works writing—such as poetry, prose, and play writings—which regards imagination as the vital core of creation. [Fiction can be a fine combination of facts and imagination.] And yet, today it is also defined more practically as those which are written creatively. Methods work here. Literary journalism, for instance, is claimed as a piece of creative writing. It is probably people's creativity "in a global consumerist model" that demands for the practical definition of creative writing.

In this sense there are greater opportunities for authors, reviewers, and teachers to intervene creative writing. Wider spaces are available. New forms and contents in creativity gain recognition. More writings can be considered appropriate as creative works. Thus, local wisdom also deserves a more space in creative writing and language teaching.

This volume presents tens of articles which mostly discuss on local wisdom and/or creative writing altogether. Few of them focus on different concerns. Categorized thematically, they may fall into three: First is articles that depict local wisdom in creative writing; second is the ones that employ local wisdom in creative writing process; and third is the ones that explore the use of local wisdom in language teaching.

Concerning the existence of local wisdom in creative writing, it is wise to see language as a means of communicating feelings, thoughts, ideas, and of voicing local (culture) wisdom to the world. In this case, there is a paper which shares ideas to engage students in activities and projects that encourage them to explore and express their local culture and identity through their creative writing. The paper also presents some examples of students' works that show their identity as Indonesians.

Besides, many literary works have been written based on the vast aspects of society and their history. It is firmly noted that society and history are important factors which shape the minds of the authors to generate new ideas and concepts of creative process in writing works of literature. They are two significant sites where the authors will always look up to relate his memory and sentimentality to speak of his mind of the world of existence.

We are happy that traditional stories, such as legends and folktales, have been manifested into valuable materials in reading and writing classes. Myths can also be used in the classroom. Myths cover up local wisdoms as well as precious life philosophies that inspire people how to behave in the society. As an example, writing a short story about Balinese myths, which are shared orally and have a lot of social-cultural norms, helps the students claim English in a personal way.

How can local wisdom be employed in creative writing process? Nowadays creative writing is not only dominated by adults. Writing novels, short stories, poems and comics is getting popular for children. Children under 12 also express their imagination and depict their experiences in creative writing. They are mostly inspired

by children who have successfully published their works earlier. Anthologies or novels series such as *KKPK (Kecil-Kecil Punya Karya)*, *PCPK (Penulis Cilik Punya Karya)*, *CCPK (Cilik-Cilik Punya Karya)* enhance this popularity. Interestingly, language choice they use in their works reflects their daily language. It is assumed that they portray their daily language in their works. Some English words are inserted into their works. It simply shows that they have known those words and use them in proper contexts.

It is also a fact that children are able to express their creativity in many ways. One of them is writing. Nowadays many of them are able to produce their works in various genres. Their works are qualified as they have been published and publicly marketed. This is an interesting phenomenon, indeed. Children are not miniature of adults. They have their own specific world. Yet, with their much limitation, they can be so creative and productive.

Of course, to put local cultures into creative writing is simple enough. Very often what we need is a keen eye for observation. We observe what we may ask, what people are going about their lives. The ways people go about their lives may constitute the culture of a given area, a place, a locality. It is meant to explore our local cultures. The ideas gained from exploration and observations can be put together to weave a short story, a poem, or a short play. As a take off for such an activity, a selected literary work can be used as a model.

Besides, some papers in this volume also indicate that local literature represents local wisdom. Javanese, Indonesian, Malay or Arabian cultures can be found in prose, poetry, and play. Today's writers seem to realize that they are enthusiastic enough to voice the cultures of their countries. Doing this may make them prouder of their countries. It is then possible to use their works for the pedagogical purposes. Meanwhile, in the context of language teaching, the importance of teaching creative writing is believed to enhance students' creativity and imagination. In relation to the use of local wisdom in the classroom, it is very important to teach creative writing by using local wisdoms. The major materials can be taken from local literary works, such as *poem, folklore, song, proverb, fable, and legend* as the learning resources. A variety of techniques can be applied to support the implementation.

Particularly in the character building context, it is probably wise to involve the students actively and creatively in studying a local literary work. Studying a literary work can be creatively done by involving the students as its readers. In this sense there are some ways to involve the readers such as asking them to create interpretations, to elicit their comments, and to make an ending of that particular literary works. Making an ending by involving the students can actively arouse students' creativity in continuing the story based on their own version and their own imagination. In short, the students also experience a recreation or remaking of a new work during the learning process.

In a further phase, the students can also be encouraged to do literary criticism. As a paper points out, literary criticism is conducted to comment and judge the qualities of literary works. As writing form which explains the literary works, literary criticism is functional to develop students' creative writing ability. "Literary writing does embody certain distinguishing characteristics: a self-conscious; imaginative mode of writing which uses words not just to convey information but as an art form. Similarly, the style of creative writing focuses on writing from emotions and thoughts rather than just giving information."

It is hoped that the papers in this volume enhance the readers to get inspired, conduct researches, and produce inspiring writings. The inspiring writings can be regarded as such living things to foster creative writers. When they do this, more and more writings can be seen in seminars, journals, or books. More particularly, it is also expected that teachers will become “transformative intellectuals” so as to form their students into humane citizens of the world. When all this happens, this proceeding will eventually find out its significance.

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Literary Criticism and Its Function on Students' Creative Writing Development

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Abstract

Literary criticism, sometimes called “secondary text” is interpretation or commentary on a literary author such as poet, novelist, and playwright on his or her literary works, what are usually called “primary text.” Literary criticism is conducted to comment and judge the qualities of literary works. In this paper literary criticism as writing form which explaining the literary works is having functions on developing students' creative writing ability will be discussed. Literary writing does embody certain distinguishing characteristics: a self-conscious; imaginative mode of writing which uses words not just to convey information but as an art form. Similarly, the style of creative writing focuses on writing from emotions and thoughts rather than just giving information, which tends to be expressive, imaginative, and literary. Any writing that expresses emotions or free thinking falls into the category of creative writing. The above correlated facts and some discussion with students about their interest in criticising literary works lead the author a new notion that conducting literary criticism is able to overcome students' obstacles in practicing creative writing.

Keywords: *literary criticism, creative writing, interconnection, secondary text*

1 Introduction

Literary criticism, sometimes called “secondary text” is interpretation or commentary on a literary author such as poet, novelist, and playwright on his or her literary works, what are usually called “primary text.” Literary criticism or literary analysis dealing with activity on evaluating, examining, critiquing any forms of literary works. It is conducted to comment and judge the quality of literary works as well as conveying the aspects of lives, authors intends to deliver through their works. For the past several decades critical theory has dominated the field of literary study. The role of critical analysis is to decipher what those works of literature might mean in a broader social, cognitive and cultural context.

Analysing literary works make us deal with the textual elements of literature and contextual ones. Textual element or intrinsic elements are: theme, characterization, setting, plot, symbolism, style and tone, and atmosphere. Contextual elements are theories for criticising literary works such as gender theory, psychological theory, deconstructionist, cultural studies, etc. Literary criticism is an intellectual exercise and it is a natural human response to literature. Doing it in academic terminology might be able to increase students writing development.

A common perception involved in literature is Creative Writing. Producing literary works such as play, novel, poetry, short stories, etc are the features which categorized as Creative Writing genre. The purpose of Creative Writing is to guide, nurture, educate, and support developing writers for the purpose of producing fine new literature. The analytical study of literature by means of critical theory provides historical background, philosophical rigor, a sociological framework and formalist knowledge that would enhance any creative writing course (Fenza, 2000). Creative writer think and literary critics are two doers that would be often very creative in its creation. The above correlated facts lead the author a new notion that conducting literary criticism is able to function on developing creative writing ability.

To support the idea more, the activity of evaluating and criticizing literary works obviously will be dealing with the components of literature as its significance. In the US universities creative writing is a major, the department assigns the students taking many subjects on literature and its review as the requirements. The department believes that as a serious student of literature, it could teach them all that they needed to know about how writing gets produced. A creative writer to be must know a great deal about literature. Students must enrol in the modules where they read, study, and discuss poetry, drama, and fiction.

2 Literary Criticism

Collins English dictionary defines literary criticism as the evaluation, study, and discussion of literature. A literature critique, sometimes called literary analysis or a literary criticism, is an examination of a piece of literature. The scope of the critique can be addressed to examine a single aspect of the work or the work in its entirety. Barnet and Cain (2003) suggest, critical thinking on literature involves seeing an issue from all sides, to as great a degree as possible. As you know, in ordinary language to criticize usually means to find fault, but in literary studies it does not have a negative connotation. Rather it means to examine carefully. The word criticism comes from a Greek verb meaning “to distinguish, to decide, to judge.” Nevertheless, in one sense the term critical thinking does approach the usual meaning, since critical thinking requires you to take a skeptical view of your response. You will argue with yourself, seeing if your response can stand up to doubts. But what standard we should have for evaluating literature? Here are some of the standards commonly set forth; Personal taste, Truth or realism, Moral content, Aesthetic qualities such as unity.

Since ancient times, readers have debated and critiqued the works of literature from a variety of perspectives. Some have looked at a piece of literature from a moral stance, considering how values are represented in a text. Another critique might evaluate it in terms of its form. Recent critics have looked at works of literature to see what it might be saying about our lives in society, our political or power relations, gender roles, or sexuality. Literary criticism seems not only to evaluate literary works or any kinds of artistic works, but it invites the literary critics exploring the shape of culture dealing with the context of the works. To evaluating the works of literature, we need theory. Kennedy and Gioia imply the following are some types of literary criticism or some theories that might consider when reading or writing (evaluating) about works of literature: 1. Formalism, New Criticism, Neo Aristotelian Criticism. 2. Biographical Criticism. 3. Historical Criticism. 4. Psychological Criticism. 5. Mythological Criticism. 6. Sociological Criticism. 7. Gender Criticism. 8. Reader-Response Criticism. 9. Deconstructionist Criticism. 10. Cultural Studies.

Those ten methods do not exhaust the total possibilities of literary criticism, They represent the most widely used contemporary approaches. Although presented separately the approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Many critics mix methods to suit their needs and interests. For example, a historical critic may use formalist technique to analyze a poem; a biographical critics will frequently use psychological theories to analyze an author. The purpose is to give you a practical introduction to each critical method and then provide representative example of it.

2.1 Writing about Literature

Literary critiques are commonly executed by students, scholars, and literary critics. The purpose of a literary analysis is to carefully examine and evaluate work of literature or an aspect of a work of literature. As with any analysis, this requires you to break the subject down into its component parts. Examining the different elements of a piece of literature is a process to help you better appreciate and understand the work of literature as a whole. For instance, an analysis of a poem might deal with the different types of images in a poem or with the relationship between the form and the content of the work. If you analyze a play, you might do it on the relationship a subplot and the main plot, or you might analyze the character flaw of the tragic hero by tracing how it is revealed through the acts of the play. Thus analyzing short story might include identifying a particular theme and showing how the writer suggests that through theme, the point of view from which the story

is told, or how the main character's attitude toward women is revealed through his dialogue and actions.

Anyone can learn how to critique a work of literature by considering the following steps:

1. Read the literary piece you plan on analyzing, or it commonly called "close-reading."

Pay close attention to the meaning of the title, which will allude to the central purpose of the work. Also be sure to look at any words and re-read any passages that you fail to understand. Close reading is a familiar way for critiquing literary works. It helps us to find the details of work that we are reading through taking focus on the works by paying attention into word by word.

2. Examine the component of the literature. The major elements of literary piece are:

- Plot. It is the story line the literature piece. Plot has two meanings; what happened, the basic of narrative and the writer's arrangement or structuring of the material into a story

- Setting and atmosphere.

Setting is the physical surrounding; the furniture, the architecture, the landscape, the climate and these often are highly appropriate to the characters which are associated with them. You can evaluate how the choice of setting affects the work's theme and mood.

- Character.

Differentiate between the main and secondary characters and identify their role and purposes in the work.

- Themes

It is the central and dominating ideas in a literary work. The term also indicates a message or moral. Decipher what the writer is trying to communicate with the literature, and what the piece is saying about human nature.

- Style

It is the author's type of diction (choice of words), and other linguistics features of a work.

- Point of view

It is the vantage point from which a narrative is told. A narrative is typically told from a first-person or third-person point of view. In a narrative told from a first-person perspective, the author tells the story through a character who refers to himself or herself as “I.” Third-person narratives come in two types: omniscient and limited. An author taking an omniscient point of view assumes the vantage point of an all-knowing narrator who is able not only to recount the action thoroughly and reliably but also to enter the mind of any character in the work or any time in order to reveal his or her thought, feeling, and beliefs directly to the reader. An author using the limited point of view recounts the story through the eyes of a single character (or occasionally more than one, but not all).

3. Form an interpretation for your literary criticism, taking the literary components into consideration. Decide what you think of the author intended meaning and how successful you feel the author is at conveying it.
4. Summarize your interpretation with a concise thesis statement; the purpose of your literary critique is to support your thesis.
5. Prove your interpretation.

Use specific examples from the literature text and supporting documentation from outside sources to back up you on your thesis.

- Find patterns in the literature that support the interpretation you are supposing in your literary analysis. Cite instances of repetition and metaphor.
- Illuminate the symbolism of the literary work and explain how it works to support your interpretation.
- Include quotation and passages from literature in your criticism as evidence of your critique.
- Use supporting arguments from other literary critique.

2.2 Creative Writing

The word creative writing is defined in various ways. As conclusion, the following statements are some definition for this term: “The ability to create,” “Imaginative,” “Productive,” “Characterized by expressiveness and originality.” Creative writing is writing that expresses ideas and thought in an imaginative way. The writers express their feelings and emotions instead of just presenting the fact. Therefore, it is not just solid writing skills that should required to be a great creative

writer, but also the ability to use your life experiences, feelings, emotions, thoughts, opinions, imagination, and spirituality to create real visuals and attractive stories for the readers.

Differences between creative writing and informative writing are delicate to get noticed, sometimes it gets deviated. Any category of writing can be written to captivate reader's emotion as well as intellect considered as this genre. A piece of writing categorized to be creative or informative focusing on writing emphasis which is informative writing is about conveying knowledge to the reader, and creative writing deals with creating emotional effect and its importance. In details, there are some features that all examples of this type share as creative genre: poetry, short stories, novels (including westerns, romances, science fiction, detective stories, mysteries, fantasies, etc), stage play script, films and television screen play, and lyric. Other genres that are not include to this type: magazine article, newspaper feature stories, essays, biographies, advertisements, card greetings, books or article on science history, etc.

It requires the writer to dig deeply into the imagination, often connected with fictional character in an alternative reality. Creative writing comes from somewhere deep inside writer's thought and feeling, from a part of the mind and soul which we all have the ability to access. Creative writing is not just for the artists and the dreamers. Incorporating creative writing assignments into the writing course plan can help the students strengthen their writing by improving their control of language, sentence structure, and narrative devices.

3. The function of Literary Criticism toward Creative Writing Development

By practicing the critical analysis on literary works, where you exploring the use of narrative structure, literary technique, character development, dialogue, sequencing, pacing, and audience in variety of ways you will have an opportunity to elaborate your ability in practicing how to write creatively.

In the Creative Writing modules, students would be given three things: first, the absolutely essential and luxurious opportunity to write, and to write a lot. Second, students would be taught by professional writers. Third, students would read lots of literary magazine and books by contemporary writers so that they could absorb the voice of the time and place in which the author were living. Students need to know about literary history, how to analyze a work of literature, learn the tool and concepts of critical production and reception while reading primary and

secondary texts (Ramey, 2001). There, students should take modules in Creative Writing taught by a literature professor, not a writer.

At City College in New York, for instance, these are the goals for modules in Creative Writing offered as part of a degree in English: 1. To write with confidence in a specific literary mode. 2. To reflect upon writing as a process and be able to redraft work in response to group criticism. 3. Demonstrate an awareness of some literary conventions and stylistic devices. 4. Show some familiarity with the contemporary literary scene (Holland, 1999). In order to achieve such goals of Creative Writing classes which are part of another academic course, modules tend to be based on a two-part pedagogy: the provision of literary models, and workshop to discuss students writing, often with a significant literary critical perspective on achievement and mastery. With this approach, students are encouraged to emulate various literary forms and techniques, accompanied by open discussion of their writing to assess their success in mastery (Ramey, 2001).

Turner emphasizes that it was an unambiguous and inarguable reality that the creation of literature and its theoretical frame were inextricably bound together. Turner, as he writes in *The Literary Mind*, one of the great cognitive advantages of a blended space is its freedom to deal in all the vivid specifics ... of both its input spaces. By means of these specifics from both input spaces, the blended space can powerfully activate both spaces and keep them easily active while we do cognitive work over them to construct meaning. Upon that circus of lively information, the mind can dwell and work to develop a projection.

4. Conclusion

The crucial difference is that Creative Writing do not produce written instances of literary criticism, it produces “literary texts.” However, the texts are not just a “one step- producing.” It is already a thoroughly critical process, inevitably is an involvement with range of literary criticism practices. Dawson emphasizes that Creative writing cannot be conceptualized as a body of knowledge outside literary theory because it is one that is fashioned within literary theory. Therefore applying theories to literary works is considered having beneficial for Creative Writing in its application such as having experience on literary components which will make students become literary-aware, having ability to get involved in literary contextual or conducting criticism into literary works that would be highly valuable for elaborating their creation on producing new fine literary works, and the last student would be more practical in their writing exercises.

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